



Scottish
Environment

LINK

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Cllr Margaret Davidson
Leader of the Council
The Highland Council
Glenurquhart Road
Inverness
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19 January 2017

Dear Cllr Davidson

Threats to funding for The Highland Council's ranger service

I am writing on behalf of Scottish Environment LINK, to support the concerns expressed by our member organisation, the Scottish Countryside Rangers' Association, regarding the proposed closure of the Highland Council's ranger service due to budget constraints.

LINK is the forum for Scotland's voluntary environment community, with over 35 member bodies representing a broad spectrum of environmental interests with a common goal of contributing to a more environmentally sustainable society.

Many of LINK's member organisations work closely with ranger services across Scotland. Rangers help our members engage with the general public to increase their understanding of the importance of our natural and cultural heritage. Ranger services are crucial in providing opportunities for people to become involved in environmental activities, for example by supporting volunteers to assist with the monitoring and recording of species in ecological and biological studies, thereby contributing to the delivery of Local Biodiversity Action Plans and other council obligations. Ranger services also play an important part in encouraging and helping the population to be more active in their local natural environment, which brings obvious public benefits in physical and mental health terms, as well as helping the council to reduce health inequalities.

We believe that investment in the ranger service delivers disproportionate benefits across society, both



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for Highland residents and visitors. We hope The Highland Council will reconsider its proposals and will continue to fund ranger services across the region.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Helen Todd', written in a cursive style.

Helen Todd
Chair

Cc: Cllr Isobel McCallum, Convener
Cllr Audrey Sinclair, Chair of Planning, Development and Infrastructure Committee
Cllr Maxine Smith, Leader of the Opposition
Mr Steve Barron, Chief Executive
Mr Stuart Black, Director of Development and Infrastructure